

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9563

S E C R E T BANGKOK 0224

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM USSAG/7AF NAKHON PHANOM APRT
TH/CS SENT ACTION CINCPAC HONOLULU HI INFO CHMEDTC PHNOM PENH,
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH, AMEMBASSY BANGKOK, COMUSMACTHAI
BANGKOK, CDR MACHTHAI SPT GP CP SAMAE SAN, JCS WASHDC, CINCPACAF
HICKHAM AFB HI 23 DEC 75 DTG 231023Z DEC 74 REPEATED FOR YOUR
INFO QUOTE

S E C R E T NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR J46, J4. JCS FOR J4.

SUBJ: TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES - RICE AIRDROP TO CAMBODIAN
ENCLAVES (U)

REF: A. AMEMB BKK 061100Z DEC 74 (NOTAL: JCS, CINCPACAF) (C)

B. CINCPAC MSG 100007Z DEC 74 (C)

C. USSAG/7AF/LG MSG 100827Z DEC 74 (NOTAL EXCEPT MEDTC) (U)

D. CHMEDTC MSG 161048Z DEC 74 (NOTAL EXCEPT USSAG, AMEMB
BKK) (C)

1. (C) REF A REQUESTED ALTERNATE STORAGE AND RIGGING SITE FOR
CAMBODIAA DESTINED RICE FOR AIRDROP BY U.S. C-130 AIRCRAFT VICE
U-TAPAO AFLD.

2. (C) REF B REQUESTED USSAG/7AF ANALYSIS OF BATTAMBANG OR
POCHENTONG AFLD CAMBODIA AS ALTERNATIVE SITE.

3. (U) REF C REQUESTED MEDTC COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON
PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES.

4. (C) REF D PROVIDED CHMEDTC COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS AND IS
QUOTED IN PART FOR YOUR REVIEW.

QUOTE - A. RIGGING OPERATIONS INVOLVING U.S. C-130 OR KAF C-123

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AIRCRAFT AT BATTAMBANG AIRFIELD CANNOT PRESENTLY BE SUPPORTED.

IN REGARD TO THE C-130 OPERATIONS AT BATTAMBANG, U.S. RIGGERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO RIG, CONDUCT JOINT AIRCRAFT INSPECTIONS, AND TRAIN FANK PERSONNEL WHO ARE NOW ONLY QUALIFIED FOR RIGGING C-123 AIRCRAFT (HEAD SPACE FOR U.S. RIGGERS WOULD BE VERY LIMITED IN NUMBERS AND TIME). FURTHERMORE, FACILITIES AND MATERIAL SIMILAR TO THAT PRESENTLY REQUIRED AT SAMAE SAN/U-TAPAO TO SUPPORT THE RICE AIRDROP OPERATIONS IN CAMBODIA WOULD ALSO BE REQUIRED AT BATTAMBANG IN ORDER TO INITIATE AND SUSTAIN AN OPERATION AT THAT LOCATION. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT WHILE LOADING, THE C-130 AIRCRAFT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SPEND APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES ON THE GROUND. SINCE THE AIRFIELD AT BATTAMBANG MAY BE SUBJECT TO INTERDICTION, IT MIGHT THEREFORE NOT ALWAYS BE USEABLE FOR THE SUPPORT OF C-130 OPERATIONS. CONCERNING THE KAF C-123 SORTIES, A MISSION OF 190 TONS OF RICE WOULD REQUIRE 32 SORTIES FROM BATTAMBANG PLUS 17 TO 18 POSITIONAL SORTIES (THERE ARE CURRENTLY ABOUT 15 PRODUCTIVE C-123 LOADS PER MONTH TO BATTAMBANG). DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS, KAF HAS ALLOCATED 35 AMMO AIRDROP SORTIES PER MONTH. ELIMINATION OF ALL KAF AMMO AIRDROP SORTIES MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF A NEED FOR SHORT NOTICE REQUIREMENTS OR URGENTLY NEEDED SMALL QUANTITIES NOT NORMALLY CARRIED BY C-130'S OR MUNITIONS OF DODIC NOT AVAILABLE AT U-TAPAO. IF C-130 AIRCRAFT ASSUMED THE AIR DELIVERY A COMPLETE REVISION OF CDS AIRCRAFT CONFIGURATION WOULD BE REQUIRED. CURRENTLY THE C-130'S ARE USING A STANDARD CDS CONFIGURATION USING ONLY THOSE TYPES OF MUNITIONS THAT ARE IN HIGH DEMAND. SOME ENCLAVES MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ABSORB FULL C-130 LOADS AND SPLITTING C-130 LOADS INTRODUCES ADDITIONAL TARGET BUNDLES, NON-STANDARD PALLET LOADING AND GATE CONFIGURATION WHICH MAY BE UNECONOMICAL AND UNMANAGEABLE. THEREFORE, IT IS REALISTIC TO PLAN AT LEAST A MINIMUM OF 15 C-123 AIRDROPS PER MONTH TO COVER MEDICINE, CONTINGENCY AND MISCELLANEOUS EMERGENCY COMPENSATING AIRDROPS. THE TOTAL UNPRODUCTIVE POSITIONAL, RICE AND COMPENSATING AIRDROPS ARE ESTIMATED TO REQUIRE 64 SORTIES AS OPPOSED TO CURRENT 35. IT IS OUR OPINION THAT C-123 ASSETS WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT UNTIL APRIL WHEN THE FIRST INCREASED INCREMENT OF KAF SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE AN INCREASED AIRLIFT CAPABILITY (3 ADDITIONAL PLANES).

B. SEE PARAGRAPH A ABOVE IN REFERENCE TO DIVERTING KAF C-123 PRIORITIES AT POCHENTONG FROM AMMO TO RICE.

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C. A C-130 RIGGING SITE AT POCHENTONG IS NOT FEASIBLE AT THIS TIME DUE TO SPACE LIMITATIONS, LACK OF MHE, AND UNTRAINED PERSONNEL TO CONDUCT A C-130 OPERATION. UNQUOTE.

5. (SNF) THREAT ASSESSMENT:

A. (C) ANTI-AIRCRAFT THREAT WITHIN A 15 KM RADIUS OF BATTAMBANG AND POCHENTONG:

(1) THE FOLLOWING ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS MAY BE ENCOUNTERED:

CALIBER/TYPE	EFFECTIVE RANGE
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14.5 HEAVY MACHINE GUN 4,593 FT

12.7 HEAVY MACHINE GUN 3,281 FT

(2) INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS EFFECTIVE UP TO 3,200

FEET MAY ALSO BE USED IN ANTI-AIRCRAFT ROLE.

B. (SNF) GROUND THREAT TO BATTAMBANG AIRFIELD:

(1) ENEMY ACTIVITY IN THE VICINITY OF BATTAMBANG

HAS CONSISTED OF SPORADIC GROUND ATTACKS AND ABF'S AGAINST FANK POSITIONS AND POPULAR FORCE UNITS DEFENDING GKR VILLAGES.

OCCASIONAL ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO INTERDICT ROUTE 5 BETWEEN BATTAMBANG AND MUONG RUSSEI.

(2) USSAG/IN CURRENTLY HOLD APPROX FOUR BNS

(1000-1200 TROOPS) WITHIN 25 KM OF BATTAMBANG. THESE TROOPS ARE PROBABLY ARMED WITH 82MM AND 60MM MORTARS, 12.7MM MACHINE GUNS, B-40/B-41 ROCKET LAUNCHES, AND INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AT PRESENT TO INDICATE THESE UNITS ARE ARMED WITH 107MM OR 122MM ROCKETS. HOWEVER, THE KC EMPLOY BOTH TYPES OF ROCKETS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTRY, AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE FORCES IN THE BATTAMBANG AREA COULD BE SUPPLIED WITH THESE ITEMS. ALTHOUGH NO INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE INDICATING THAT THESE UNITS ARE ARMED WITH ANY TYPE OF RECOILLESS RIFLE, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY ARE ARMED WITH A MINIMAL NUMBER OF 57MM OR 75MM RRS.

C. (SNF) GROUND THREAT TO POCHENTONG AIRFIELD:

(1) ENEMY TROOPS ARE NOT CURRENTLY CONDUCTING

OPERATIONS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY (15KM) OF POCHENTONG. THE MOST RECENT ABF DIRECTED AGAINST POCHENTONG WAS A 13 OCT SEVEN ROUND 107MM ROCKET ATTACK CONDUCTED DURING THE HOURS OF DARKNESS. NO DAMAGE TO AIRFIELD FACILITIES RESULTED. THE AIRFIELD IS A STATED OBJECTIVE FOR THE KC DRY SEASON CAMPAIGN. OTHER 107MM RKT FIRINGS, SUSPECTED TO HAVE BEEN AIMED AT POCHENTONG WERE REPORTED ON 25 AND 29 OCT.

(2) USSAG/IN CURRENTLY HOLDS APPROX TEN BNS (APPROX

2,500-3,000 TROOPS) WITHIN 20 KMS OF THE AIRFIELD. THESE FORCES PROBABLY POSSESS 105MM HOWITZERS, 122MM AND 107MM RKTs,

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120MM/82MM/60MM MORTARS, 57MM AND 75MM RRS, 12.7MM MACHINE GUNS, B-40/B-41 RKT LAUNCHERS, AND INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS.

D. (C) THREAT TO A SUSTAINED USAF C-130 BASE OF OPERATION

AT POCHENTONG WOULD BE MODERATE TO HIGH: THREAT TO SIMILAR OPERATIONS AT BATTAMBANG WOULD BE LOW TO MODERATE.

6. (C) THREE ADDITIONAL FACTORS HAVE TRANSPIRED SINCE REF A THAT COULD AFFECT THE TRANSSHIPMENT PROBLEM SUBSTANTIALY:

A. THE POSSIBILITY OF MOVING BATTAMBANG RICE TO THAILAND BY SURFACE (TRUCK) IS CURRENTLY BEING EXPLORED. SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION OF THIS ALTERNATIVE WOULD ALLEVIATE THE TRANSSHIPMENT PROBLEM.

B. DUE TO THE STRINGENT FUNDING IN CAMBODIA, KAF SELF-SUFFICIENCY MAY NOT MATERIALIZE AND EVEN GREATER RELIANCE WILL BE PLACED ON U.S. AIRDROPS FROM U-TAPAO. THIS ALTERNATIVE PLACES EVEN MORE EMPHASIS ON RESOLUTION OF THE TRANSSHIPMENT PROBLEM.

C. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT IN CONSIDERING THE USE OF POCHENTONG IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE MEKONG LOC INTO POCHENTONG OR THE USE OF POCHENTONG ITSELF COULD BE INTERDICTED. THIS HEADQUARTERS IS CURRENTLY CONDUCTING A STUDY OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MEANS IF THIS SHOULD HAPPEN AND WILL FORWARD THE STUDY TO YOUR HEAD-QUARTERS UPON COMPLETION, IN APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS.

GDS 31 DEC 82. UNQUOTE.

KINTNER

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